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The Great Upset of Infrastructures

There were very good reasons, in the last quarter of the 20th century, to claim that *the personal is political*. One could see the #MeToo movement as its (late but) direct consequence. It may be more accurate, however, to see two approaches converging in #MeToo and its aftermath. One narrowly *retributive* approach is focused on denouncing offenders, sending them to courts and to prison, in order to balance the harm they have caused with the appropriate punishment they deserve. While this approach counts on the collective deterrence-effects of punishment, it remains based on an individualistic premise of *personal* responsibility. Another more *transformative* approach incriminates not only abusive individuals, but a larger “rape culture”, which was of course comforted by the rarity of actual punishment for rape crimes, but which had a much broader extension within our social structures, collective imaginaries, and mental prejudices. It is only at this level that the personal can be understood as *political*: it pertains to the collective duty of our common political institutions to protect women from sexual abuse. What one rapist feels entitled to commit is not (only) a matter of his “personal choice”, but (also) a matter of collective, political responsibility – raising the question of what policies, laws, regulations and institutions ought to be set in place to prevent, as much as possible, the general causal processes leading to actual violence.

When pushed to its consequential limit, transformative justice not only attempts to identify the structural causes that help explain personal behavior¹. In her investigation on the meaning of consent, Clara Serra has persuasively shown that inquiring into the causal infrastructures that condition our personal behaviors leads to disturbing questions about the ethical (if not legal) status of our individual capacity to choose and consent². The current all-out attack against “wokism” may be interpreted as an ideological defense-reaction against the truly transformative implications of understanding the personal as political. Beyond a rather traditional “culture war” between the (far-)left and the (far-)right, what is at stake is not only our political bend, but also our shared conceptions of causality and individuality – insofar as these conceptions are being reshaped by a growing awareness of how much infrastructures matter.

THE POLITICAL IS INFRASTRUCTURAL

Infrastructure Studies are a surprisingly recent development in social analysis. In the English language, they have emerged during the last four decades. While, from a scholarly point of view, they are closely associated with Science and Technology Studies, they also seem to surf on a broader political wave deeply rooted in a (post-)Marxist tradition. As our growth-oriented productive mega-machines have to face new constraints brought by “the end of cheap nature³”, the most radical analyses of the Capitalocene have clearly identified

¹ See Ejeris Dixon & Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (eds.), *Beyond Survival. Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement*, Chico: AK Press, 2020.

² Sara Serra, *El sentido de consentir*, Madrid: Anagrama, 2024.

³ Jason W. Moore, “The End of Cheap Nature. Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying about ‘The’ Environment and Love the Crisis of Capitalism”, in C. Suter and C. Chase-Dunn (eds.), *Structures of*

infrastructures as the main site of political struggles in the years ahead, as illustrated in books by the French Invisible Committee (2014, 37, 41):

*Power now resides in the infrastructures of this world. Contemporary power is of an architectural and impersonal, and not a representative or personal, nature. [...] Power is now immanent in life as it is technologically organized and commodified. [...] A revolutionary perspective no longer focuses on an institutional reorganization of society, but on the technical configuration of worlds. [...] For if this world keeps going, it's largely owing to everyone's material dependence on the smooth general operation of the social machine for their survival*⁴.

This conception of infrastructures implicitly focuses on their physical materiality: we are led to imagine them as human-built systems of material substrates that fulfill needs, providing basic services not spontaneously given by nature, and therefore establishing new forms of dependency towards them once they have been established. By asserting that “power resides in the infrastructures of this world”, the Invisible Committee radicalizes a common intuition about “political ecology”: infrastructures are a matter of *ecology*, insofar as they provide the human-made ‘environments’ which condition our possible forms of life; making decisions about our common infrastructures is intrinsically *political*, insofar as our future social life, for generations to come, will be determined by the way these infrastructures have been designed and implemented. Launch the planning and construction of at least six (and up to fourteen) new nuclear power plants – as French President Emmanuel Macron did without any democratic consultation or debate in 2025 – and billions of people’s lives will be deeply affected by this decision, not only during the 50 years of the plants’ operations, but for the 100 000 years when dangerous nuclear waste will have to be managed and controlled (at a cost nobody has yet started to seriously figure out).

If the political is now infrastructural, it certainly is not democratic: “the technical configuration of worlds” is left to engineers, economists and executives dramatically removed from our conception and practices of civic agency. This may be why the Anthropocene fails to capture popular engagement: among all the *anthropoi* (ἄνθρωποι) concerned by infrastructural design, only a minuscule elite of (mostly) *andres* (ἄνδρες) find themselves in a position to decide how our common scene will be structured. Hence the paradox: the political may now be infrastructural, but *the infrastructural remains deeply a-political* (in our common imaginary and in our current decision-making processes).

To better understand this gridlock – and hopefully to break it up – one needs to consider the very special properties of infrastructures. Luca Corchia and Andrea Borghini have accurately described “the modeling power of ‘infrastructural things’ in orienting practices, forming habitus, and structuring fields of action. Infrastructures testify to the co-constitution of agency and structure: they embody sedimented practices while simultaneously shaping and informing new ones⁵”. Not only do infrastructures shape current and future human agency, but their material ‘thingness’ always carries with itself an institutional and an imaginary dimension. Airport buildings and runways are not only entangled with airplanes and kerosene, but also with *institutions* (airline companies, with their hierarchies between top executives, pilots, flight crews, ground crews) and with *shared representations* (the possibility and desire to cross the world to enjoy a holiday in family or to spend a winter week-end on a hot exotic island).

the World Political Economy and the Future of Global Conflict and Cooperation. Berlin: LIT, 2014, p. 285-314.

⁴ Invisible Committee, *To Our Friends*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2014.

⁵ Luca Corchia & Andrea Borghini, “Infrastructure as a sociological category: Concept, applications, and paradigmatic turns?”, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2025, Vol. 25(2), p. 127.

This entanglement of material, institutional and imaginary realities appears very clearly in the striking list provided by Susan Leigh Star to describe the common properties shared by all infrastructures⁶:

“*Embeddedness*. Infrastructure is sunk into and inside of other structures, social arrangements, and technologies; [...] it is built on an installed base.” The physical structure of the Internet could not do anything if it was not embedded into another infrastructure of electrical production which provides the energy it needs to function. Infrastructures are articulated to each other in complex hierarchical levels, where the upper layers (an app) are in a relation of functional dependency towards the lower layers (service providers, electricity production and distribution), even though an apparently superficial newcomer (Google in the early 2000) can drastically reconfigure the relationships of power.

“*Transparency*. Infrastructure is transparent to use, in the sense that it does not have to be reinvented each time or assembled for each task, but invisibly supports those tasks.” Infrastructures are engineered artifacts that provide humans with a “super-natural” power, but once we are used to connect to our social media, we consider “natural” (literally: “basic”) to do so. “Infrastructures become visible upon breakdown.”

“*Learned as part of membership*. The taken-for-grantedness of artifacts and organizational arrangements is a *sine qua non* of membership in a community of practice.” The shared representations are not only a precondition for benefiting from the services provided by internet connections; they also work as a precondition for sharing certain forms of sociality.

“*Reach or scope*. This may be either spatial or temporal – infrastructure has reach beyond a single event or one-site practice.” Our common conception of infrastructures includes large or massive scale as one of its premises.

“*Embodiment of standards*.” Because of their tendential scalability, infrastructures tend to impose technical and social standards well beyond their own material network. The rapid rise of the internet was made possible by a number of standardized protocols, where Alexander Galloway saw the form of power establishing itself after decentralization⁷.

“*Is fixed in modular increments, not all at once or globally*. Because infrastructure is big, layered, and complex, and because it means different things locally, it is never changed from above.” As an entanglement of physical inertia, institutional bureaucracies and social habits, infrastructures tend to resist from below to sudden imperatives of transformation dropped from above. Yet, because of their scale, because of the financial means and regulatory power necessary to their build up and maintenance, they also tend to provide a major venue for State and corporate power to align societies to their agenda.

Susan Leigh Star’s description of large-scale infrastructures constantly takes the reader from the physicality of “technologies” to the psychology of “taken-for-grantedness”, via the social reality of “standards”. This back-and-forth movement deserves to be further investigated, if we are to make sense of the political grip Anthropocenic infrastructures maintain on today’s and tomorrow’s ecologies.

THE GREAT UPSET: BASE ALL THE WAY UP?

One word in the English language epitomizes what Corchia and Borghini called “the modeling power of ‘infrastructural things’”: *facilities*. Infrastructures “facilitate” human

⁶ Susan Leigh Star, “The Ethnography of Infrastructure”, *American Behavioral Scientist*, 1999, vol. 43(3), p. 381-382.

⁷ Alexander Galloway, *Protocols. How Control Exists After Decentralization*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2004.

operations: they make them easier, less costly, less time-consuming. They *make* intercontinental communication or travel “doable” (*facere*). Brian Larking calls them *meta-pragmatic objects*: “infrastructures are the means by which a State proffers representations to its citizens and asks them to take those representations as social facts⁸” By making certain moves doable, they effectively make us do these moves. And because their standards are quickly “embodied”, “embedded” in our daily habits, “learned as part of membership” and “transparent”, our most common activities and aspirations are organized through and through by the infrastructures designed and spread by a small elite of decision-makers. With the deeper power of penetration afforded to informational technology in the 21st century, Keller Easterling portrays “infrastructure space” as the “operating system” of our collective lives: “contemporary infrastructure space is the secret weapon of the most powerful people in the world precisely because it orchestrates activities that can remain unstated but are nevertheless consequential⁹”.

Such definitions of infrastructures need to be recontextualized within the history and archaeology of the term. Justinien Tribillon showed that the word *infrastructure* was first used in French in 1857 during the construction of the first railroads. It distinguished two levels: on one side, “the cost of what sat *below* the railway tracks [the *infra*-structure] was to be borne by the ‘public sector’”; on the other side, “the tracks and what sat *above* was the domain of private actors” [the *super*-structure]¹⁰. He also retraces the appropriation of the word by the Marxist tradition from the 1890s. It found its anchorage in Marx’s *Zur Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie* (1859) which stated that “the sum total of the relations of production constitutes the economic structure [*Struktur*] of society – the real foundation [*die reale Basis*], on which rise legal and political superstructures [*Überbau*] and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness”¹¹. From then on, Marxist analyses of societies would endlessly debate about the degree to which *infrastructures* in French or *base* in English (the material economic means and relations of production) were supposed to “determine” *superstructures* (legal, political, cultural institutions and their imaginary contents).

On the face of it, this approach made – and still makes – a lot of sense. You won’t have posters advertising for a week-end in the Bahamas, IATA conventions and debates about taxing kerosene (in the superstructure), if you have not developed the material technology for commercial airlines and airports (the infrastructure). Even when taking into account Corchia and Borghini’s point about “the modeling power of ‘infrastructural things’ in orienting practices, forming habitus, and structuring fields of action”, it remains true that you need *a base* (an *infra*-structure: railroad tracks) to build *super*-structure *upon* it (wagons and train stations).

We should thank Infrastructure Studies for uncovering the highly complex temporal loops through which future (imaginary) potentials aspire the (actual) construction of large-scale material artefacts, and induce new habits which will create new aspirations justifying new physical alterations in our surround. But we shouldn’t forget their main point of relevance (which may also be the main reason for their increasing visibility over the past 40 years): if the railroads were to melt overnight due to a malign demon’s whim (or more slowly due to global warming), neither the wagons nor the train stations would be able to provide the type of services expected from them.

⁸ Brian Larkin, “The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure”, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 2013, 42, p. 335-336.

⁹ Keller Easterling, *Extrastatecraft. The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London: Verso, 2014, p. 15.

¹⁰ Justinien Tribillon, “Inventing ‘infrastructure’: tracing the etymological blueprint of an omnipresent sociotechnical metaphor,” *SocArXiv mx2u7*, Center for Open Science, 2021, p. 14.

¹¹ Karl Marx, *Contribution to Political Economy*, 1859, quoted in Tribillon, art.cit., p. 24.

This may be the main conundrum of our age – which can be characterized as a *double displacement of base*:

1° Classical Marxism as well as neo-classical economics (with its monomaniac obsession on GDP growth) identified “the economy” as the infrastructure/base which determined or facilitated all other social forms of development. We are – finally! – just starting to realize that what we are calling *ecology* actually functions as an *infra*-infrastructure/base, whose bio-physical metabolism determines or impedes all forms of socio-economic reproduction. Ecology is the base under the economic base: *it’s base under base!*

2° As we realize how much the design of ‘infrastructural things’ orients practices, forms habitus, and structures fields of action, we are led to understand not only that infrastructure/base configures superstructural lifestyles, but also that *cultural imaginaries* (shared understandings, common aspirations, administrative expectations, conceptual toolboxes) conversely pre-configure and constrain the development of our means and modes of material (re)production. The economic base rests upon the cultural base: *it’s base all the way up!*

This double displacement extends and upsets infrastructures in two apparently contradictory directions: all the way down, obsolete conceptions of the economy dig our ecological grave; all the way up, culture becomes a determinant – infrastructural – factor in our (in)capacity to transform our social metabolism. Our challenge is not only to face this great upset but, more importantly, to try and steer it away from the current race towards catastrophe.

TIPPING POINTS: AI AS A-CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURES

In his fascinating and highly disquieting 2019 book *The Terraforming*, Benjamin Bratton confronted that conundrum head on. In a chapter entitled “Regime: all your base”, he wrote that “the necessary transformations in our artificial planetarity may be less the outcome of some big cultural shift than its cause. Base precedes superstructure, but it may be base all the way down¹²”. The ambitious program sketched in his book called for computational platforms to function as “the infrastructural media for the planetary-scale infrastructures of alternative valuation and exchange”. The unprecedented power of our computational apparatuses – processing information gathered from our ubiquitous capacities to sense bio-physical transformations at a planetary scale – transformed politics into a matter of (computer-assisted) *design*. The derivative-addicted financial sphere provides a first glimpse toward such a form of automated regulation, in a dramatically toxic, hijacked and class-biased version. What if we attempted to turn this super-infrastructure upside down?

We want to design for the subordination and inclusion of the financial media into a planetary geoeconomics whose models attend to the abstraction of matter and interchange: economics as a subroutine of ecology. [...] Our climatic models can use the media of the now-internalized financial apparatus to steer the sensing, indexing, and storing of value according to different definitions, ontologies, and relations between living beings and processes. [...] The geopolitics, geoeconomics, and geotechnologies that would emerge would do so in adaptive relationship with one another: base upon base upon base¹³.

¹² Benjamin Bratton, *The Terraforming*, Moscow, Strelka Institute, 2019, p. 34.

¹³ Bratton, *The Terraforming*, op. cit., p. 40-44.

In its openly post-democratic scope, Bratton's plan was equally daring and worrying. Half-a-dozen years after its publication, it resonates too closely for comfort with the reactionary accelerationist agenda of Silicone Valley libertarian techno-solutionists.

In this context, the absurd overblowing of the AI hype provides a real-time example of this head-over-heels up-setting of infrastructures. The 2020s are building demented amounts of infrastructures (data servers, electrical powerplant, mining facilities) to satisfy a non-existing demand for the ability to morph a cute cat into hated politician's face, or to generate term papers that will be instantaneously disqualified by the teacher. The technology of neural networks, large language models (LLM) and latent spaces clearly constitutes an unprecedented progress in the automation of animal and human cognition, just like the technical mastery of nuclear fission was an astonishing achievement in physics. But pushing AI down the throat of every active computer is as absurd, ridiculous and dangerous as pushing opioids into everybody's nervous system, or convincing every household acquire its stock of nuclear waste.

Rather than Artificial Intelligence, AI should stand for *Automated Imagination*, insofar as it tends to substitute our personal capacity to synthesize and re-elaborate sensory data by an automated and industrialized syntheses based on the statistical convergence of other people's tendencies. But it should no less stand for *A-critical Infrastructures*: given our current sustainability constraints, there is no justification for mobilizing so many resources to build infrastructures meant to "popularize" a tool that can be extremely useful in limited settings, but that can lead to a widespread proletarianization of intellectual work. The AI hype illustrates the worst case of the great upset of infrastructures: from above, cultural values (hijacked by competitive financial pressure and rogue advertisement) a-critically generate artificial needs which (fail to) justify the building, on the ground, of gigantically wasteful material infrastructures.

Benjamin Bratton may be right in hoping that some of that computational power can one day help us collectively face and eschew environmental disasters. But, in the meantime, the financial dementia of extractive capitalism fuels the construction of large-scale infrastructures that wreck our bio-physical, as well as mental, living milieus.

Beyond the specific case of LLMs, the notion of *A-critical Infrastructures* opens a window on what may be the most original and important recent development in the field of Infrastructure Studies. In the 1970s, Ivan Illich coined as "counter-productivity" tipping points where the originally beneficial effects of certain infrastructures turned negative: as the construction of roads and automobiles led to the uncontrolled multiplication of cars in urban spaces, traffic jams made it faster to move around by bike. Over that last ten years, several important publications have documented such tipping points where "facilities" (meant to facilitate certain operations) cause harmful effects that overcompensate their benefits. Anna Tsing and her colleagues published a *Feral Atlas* that documented how "human-made infrastructures have unleashed a set of catastrophic feral effects that endanger life at a planetary scale", *ferality* being defined by the fact that these effects "emerge within human-sponsored projects but are not in human control"¹⁴. Alexandre Monnin identifies as *negative commons* infrastructures that simultaneously feed our current forms of life and ruin the living environments left to future generations (oil industry, agrobusiness, nuclear powerplants)¹⁵. Our epochal tragedy is that we are sitting on infrastructural branches that poison our surround: we cut the branches, we fall; but the monger we keep sitting on them, the higher the toxicity.

Beyond such tipping point, a-critical infrastructures no longer operate as facilitators but as weapons of mass destruction. That is why the French collective *LES SOULÈVEMENTS DE LA*

¹⁴ Anna Tsing & al., *Feral Atlas*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2021, <https://feralatlas.org/>.

¹⁵ Alexandre Monnin, « Negative Commons » in Nicolas Nova & Disnovation, *A Bestiary of the Anthropocene*, Eindhoven: Onomatopée, 2021.

TERRE calls for their *disarmament* (rather than mere “sabotage”)¹⁶. Cement factories that concrete over the countryside, mega-basins that accumulate water for the sole benefits of agro-industrial farms, pipelines that fuel climate change: while such infrastructures claim to fulfill functions and services we all need and demand, they should be seen instead as weapons in a purely capitalist arms’ race for profit, and they should be disarmed as such.

FACING INVOLUTION: CULTURE ALL THE WAY DOWN?

In his inquiry on the origins of the word *infrastructure*, Justinien Tribillon also notes that “the opposition infrastructure/superstructure does not come from engineering per se, but from its financing. Infrastructure is the invention of financiers invested by an industrialist utopia, not that of engineers¹⁷”. To determine whether the wagon was *supra* and the rail *infra* did not make much sense for the engineer, nor for the driver of the locomotive. It did for the investors of capital.

What if our very concept of infrastructure was permeated through and through by financial capitalism? What if the dynamic relations between base and superstructure ought to be elucidated and re-elaborated away from the ideological dominance of *homo oeconomicus* (and its most recent offspring *homo financialis*)?

Recent declaration by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) may paradoxically point in this direction. A stupefying amount of infrastructures have been built in China over the last 40 years, correlated with the unleashing of capitalist dynamics under CPC rules. Since July 2024, however, a number of official statements have stressed the need to fight *involution* (内卷, *nèijuán*), described as the negative feral effect of “relentless price-cutting”, “excessive competition”, “unhealthy competition”, “irrational competition”, “vicious competition”, “rat race competition”¹⁸. In other words, the CPC seems to be discovering the “race to the bottom” of socio-environmental standards denounced for many decades by the critics of the global financial system.

Which begs the question: should financial competition be located at the level of “base” or of “superstructure”? *Involution* may provide a powerful descriptor to understand the socio-ecological autophagy of our infrastructural facilities. While it questions legal issues of regulation and political issues of governance, it is also rooted in a neo-Darwinian ideology which deeply permeates our dominant Western culture. Bratton is right in assessing that “today, planetary self-sensing [i.e., computing power] does not cause climate change. In essence, culture does¹⁹” [in the form of advertisement, aspirations to wealth and luxury items]. But he may be wrong in discarding too hastily the inescapable necessity of a “big cultural shift”.

Such a cultural shift drives alternative trends in Infrastructural Studies, well illustrated by Jennifer Mae Hamilton and Astrida Neimanis’ work on ‘weathering’ (rather than ‘climate change’). They note that “often protecting people is just a code for protecting capital, power or vested interests”:

We are in this perverse moment where infrastructural solutions are being proposed as band-aids to prop up the same infrastructures that support the practices that are driving the

¹⁶ Les Soulèvements de la terre, *Premières secousses*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2024.

¹⁷ Tribillon, “Inventing ‘infrastructure’”, art. cit., p. 20.

¹⁸ Matthew C. Klein, “China’s ‘Anti-Involution’ Campaign: Global Implications”, *The Offshoot*, Sept. 25, 2025, <https://theovershoot.co/p/chinas-anti-involution-campaign-global>. See also Nathan Sperber, “Cette étrange contorsion de l’économie chinoise”, *Le Monde diplomatique*, December 2025, p. 16-17.

¹⁹ Bratton, *The Terraforming*, op. cit., p. 41

problem. [...] We propose an infrastructure of the mezzo scale to slowly build different kinds of social worlds well. Feminist infrastructure for better weathering, as we understand it, would be systems to support this recentralisation of care in a decolonial future²⁰.

A comparable approach is at the core of an important recent book by Joseph Masco, Tim Choy, Jake Kosek & M. Murphy. They reject the usual “green” vocabulary of *planet*, *environment*, *land*, *species* (and probably *infrastructures*) as inherent parts of “insidious defense mechanisms protective of White Supremacy’s foundations. We diagnose efforts to save the planet that maintain structures and forms of Whiteness as a syndrome we call *Fear of a Dead White Planet*. [...] FDWP infuses material infrastructures and epistemological practices to such a degree that even as we try to let it die, in an attempt to reduce its ongoing harm, it nonetheless conditions worlds”²¹.

This takes us back to our initial considerations on #MeToo, the personal and the political. Punishing individual abusers may have useful deterrence-effects, but leaves in place the “rape-culture” that generates abuse by normalizing it. Similarly, trading an old thermic car for a new electrical one, even if it did result in a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (which remains to be proven when people buy SUVs), mainly shifts one extractivist mode of transportation for another, without questioning the profit-oriented individualist-consumerist economic logic on which the car industry is premised. There are many good reasons for traditional Marxism to locate cultural forms and values at the level of “the superstructures”. But it is no less true that our current industrial infrastructures are entirely based upon the reproduction of the “imperial mode of living”²² characteristic of our dominant “WC-culture” (where *W* could equally stand for Wasteful, Wealthy, Western, White, Wonky or Workaholic, while *C* would certainly stand for Competitive).

The huge infrastructures of industrial factories, warehouses and server farms are fuelled by consumer demand and advertising campaign, as much as by oil tankers and power plants. As ‘facilities’, they merely *facilitate* the exhaustive exploitation of our social and biological surrounds. What animates and drives the process is the constantly renewed flow of beliefs and desires we collectively put into it. It’s culture all the way down!

Here’s a thought-experiment: what would happen if enough of us, WC-consumers, decided to stop purchasing anything beyond staple food? Wouldn’t the capitalist ecocidal world-economy collapse in a matter of weeks? What would that tell us about the intricate, asymmetrical but crucial knot that ties together the personal, the political and the infrastructural? There is still a long way to go, but recent years have brought encouraging head starts in the dismantling of the rape-culture. Would it be so much harder to confront and disarm the WC-culture?

To reject involution, which forces everyone to work ever harder for little or no marginal gain, an increasing number Chinese youths practice the art of *tangping* (躺平, “lying flat”) as

²⁰ Jennifer Mae Hamilton & Astrida Neimanis, “An infrastructural politics for climate change adaptation, via weather: Interview by Enrico Campo”, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2025, Vol. 25(2), p. 210, 211 & 219. See also by the same authors, *How to Weather Together: Feminist Practice for Climate Change* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2026).

²¹ Joseph Masco, Tim Choy, Jake Kosek & M. Murphy, *Fear of a Dead White Planet*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2025, p. 2 & 74.

²² See Ulrich Brand & Markus Wissen, *The Imperial Mode of Living: Everyday Life and the Ecological Crisis of Capitalism*, London: Verso, 2021.

a form of counter-culture²³. Critical Infrastructure Studies may have a lot to learn from the fight against involution – and from the art of lying down, all the way down.

²³ See the excellent article by Marine Brossard, “Lying Flat: Profiling the *Tangping* Attitude”, *Made In China Journal*, Jan. 8, 2023, <https://madeinchinajournal.com/2023/01/08/lying-flat-profiling-the-tangping-attitude/>